The Theosophical FORUM

JANUARY 1902

OUR ARTICLES:

	PAGE
THE NEED OF THE HOUR	161
THE BOOKS OF HIDDEN WISDOM	163
* * *	167
THE INDIVIDUAL GOD	170
A NEW DEPARTURE	178

ISSUED MONTHLY

VOL. 7 NO. 9

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THE THEOSOPHICAL

FORUM

VOL. 7. JANUARY, 1902 No. 9

THE NEED OF THE HOUR.

Those who have rightly learned and wisely studied, have now come to a point where something different from learning or study is demanded of them. They must learn to work. They must begin to use their powers.

All that has gone before, has led up to this. Immense preparations have been made. Nothing has been left undone. The way has been prepared, the path has been made straight. The inspiring example of great hearts has been given; their visible presence has been felt and seen.

Knowledge has been poured forth abundantly; perhaps too abundantly, so that some, from over-learning, have grown confused. Yet great care has been taken that each should have just so much as his powers required, as he could accept and make his own.

The time has come when no more examples are needed, or will be given; when no more teaching concerning hidden things will be sent forth, except to meet a new demand;—the demand of those who are actually at work, and who need that knowledge in their work.

All leads up to this: Those who will not now use their powers,—use them for others, use them for the world,—will stay just where they are. They will wonder at the silence, the seeming deadness of things. But there will be no answer to their riddle from any other. They must find it for themselves. They must find it by work. They must find it by using their royal powers.

The greatest power of all, the one most needed to be used, is Valor. Many of those who should now be working, are held in check by fear. Put that fear away. Call forth the latent courage that is hiding in your heart. Trust your soul.

Those who seek some benefit, some wisdom or secret or power, for themselves, have failed already. All the souls of men are in need of help, and this is one of the rare periods when that help can be easily and effectively given,and willingly received. This is no time to make private hoards.

Each one of us has a great opportunity—and a heavy responsibility. This penalty is laid upon us: that only by the active exertion of our wills for others, can we move an inch further; and we must of ourselves determine to make that exertion. Nothing more can be done for us, or will be done, until we have earned it by work effectively and adequately done. Hold this heavy responsibility in your heart, until you have worked off your debt.

THE BOOKS OF HIDDEN WISDOM.

. . . Beheld the Gods all, sweatless, steady-eyed, their flower-wreaths fresh and dust-free, as they stood, touching not the ground; but he, doubled by his shadow, his flower-wreath withered, stained with sweat and dust, standing on the earth, with eyelids tremulous. . . .—*The Story of Nala.*

I have a friend who, I think, has come back to us after many lives among the braves; has come back, wrapped in the breath of wild, mighty forests, touched with the bronzed twilight of gaunt mountain-summits, the whir of the eagles' wings still resounding in his ears. And dwelling among us somewhat aloof, still longing for his great rocky solitudes, a stranger though very welcome, he has found his way to our books, and is comparing their spirit a little curiously with the great earth-breath and air-breath and night-breath that coursed so gladly through his untamed heart.

Whatever this wanderer says of our books is well worth hearing; it is good for us to see how they look, mirrored in eyes that gazed across the western ocean from some lava-knotted precipice, as the sunset shot up molten over the rainless sea; good especially to hear what he says of our religions, and what aspect they bear, to him so newly come back from the heart of mother earth.

And one day he found together the Gospels and the Upanishads, books esteemed greatly holy, so different in time and age and tongue, yet so full of things dear to our hearts, as they turn back wearied by the commonplace of the world.

One knows not exactly why, perhaps because they are so much better translated, perhaps because of their very strangeness—the quality of sweet reasonableness being somewhat unknown in the lands of the braves—but at present my friend is altogether for the Gospels, and will not hear of the Upanishads at all. The Evangels of Israel, he says, are deeper and clearer and broader and longer than the Indian Books of Hidden Wisdom.

And as all things this sky-clad critic says are full of deep suggestion, even when they are the very opposite of what one expected from him, I fell a-thinking as to how the difference he so clearly feels between the Upanishads and the Gospels might be described; what names we could give the one and the other, so as to bring the truth about their natures to light.

First, the Gospels—to us a joy and a sorrow for so many generations, to him so new and strange. One need not enter at all into asking what persons or personages stand behind them; one can take them as they are, in themselves. And the first thing that is very clear about them is, that they are poetry, full of imagination and color, full of natural magic. This is pure poetry, and nothing else: Consider the lilies how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

And again, what excellent poetry is this, spoken very likely among the vineyards: I am the vine, ye are the branches. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away; every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it that it may bear more fruit. Already ye are clean. . . .

What exquisite feeling and beauty in it all; in the goodly pearl, the prince's marriage, the lost sheep, the fig-tree, the wedding feast. Each one of them a compact little poem, not a word out of place, with that perfect economy of beauty, from which the rough handling of the ages can break off no superfluous fragment.

Yet our life is concerned with other things than beauty, though it should be greatly concerned with beauty too. Our life is concerned chiefly with two things, that a quaint old document calls our duty to God, and our duty to our neighbor. And in weighing books like these we must chiefly ask what they have to say of these two things, of our duty to God, and our duty to our neighbor.

And here, it seems to me, the real difference between the Gospels and the Upanishads comes out.

The poet of the lilies and the vines was largely occupied with these two things, and found for each of them an expression full of sweetness and light. That wonderful power that approaches our hearts and minds from within, and kindles in them a strange, infinite light; that power that the framers of the quaint old document called God, the poet of the lilies called the Father, the Father of us, he in the heavens. And with abundant riches of sentiment, with the warmest color, with high poetic beauty, this is insisted on: that our duty is to love the Father of us, the Father in the heavens.

Then our second duty; here the quaint old document has borrowed from the poet of the lilies that happy phrase of his, our neigh-

bor, taken from the poem of the pitiful Samarite and his olive oil and wine. Here again we have a precept of admirable beauty: to love our neighbors as ourselves.

So far the Gospels. Then the Upanishads. What is most potent there, in the Books of Hidden Wisdom, is not rich imaginative beauty, warm coloring, the magic glow of poetry, though they are full of beauty too. What is most potent is a high, lonely intuition that wraps us out of ourselves, and calls us away into the great silent depths of being; where the wide waters of life roll for ever; where the fiery breaths of endlessness pour in upon us, and thrill us with a sense of new mightiness, pouring into us a power as of vast antiquity that is still for ever young with the youth of the immortals.

Verses like these: As from a glowing fire, kindred sparkles come forth thousandfold; so, from the Eternal, manifold beings come forth, and return again to the Eternal. That Seer is never born nor dies, nor is it from anywhere, nor did any become it. Unborn, everlasting, immemorial, ancient, smaller than small, mightier than mighty. In the highest golden veil is the stainless, partless Eternal; this is the shining, the light of lights, that the self-knowers know. The sun shines not there, nor moon and star, nor this lightning, nor fire like this; after the shining of that, all shines; from the shining of that, all else receives its shining.

Sentence after sentence like this one might gather, hour after hour, from the Books of Hidden Wisdom. Here is beauty, and high poetic force too, though not the trailing luxuriance of the poet of lilies and vines. Beauty and high poetic force, though these are not the chief things, but only secondary to the aboriginal light of intuition.

Yet, when this is said, all is not said; for the supreme worth of the Upanishads is the face they put on the two duties of the quaint old document, the duty to God, the duty to our neighbor. For they first, instead of the Father of us, he in the heavens, they give us the supreme Self, the lonely Eternal. And our duty to this most real Self is simple and splendidly natural; our duty is not to love, but to become that supreme Self; to realize that we are, and have ever been, that supreme Self; to enter boldly into our own in-

finite eternalness, to know that we are the All, the glowing Eternal, whence the kindred sparkles came.

And the second is like unto it; instead of our neighbor, receptive of olive oil and wine, we have the supreme Self in all beings: he who realizes all beings in Self and Self in all beings, thenceforth sorrows not any more.

Not so tender, so sweet, perhaps, as the Father and the children, even if these are some day to be perfected into one; not so tender, perhaps, yet, it seems to me, far fuller of potent reality, stirring the infinities within us, calling us forth to be, not children of the realm, but lords, or rather supreme Lord of the kingdom, by primeval birthright and inborn majesty.

Not so tender, perhaps, but far nearer to reality, to that great, strange power within us that is already stirring into limitless being.

The Gospels, with their message of humanity, like that mortal who, doubled by his shadow, his flower-wreath withered, stained with sweat and dust, stood on the earth with eyelids tremulous; the Books of Hidden Wisdom, the Upanishads, with their intuition of that dread primeval Self, like a message of the Gods, sweatless, steady-eyed, their flower-wreaths fresh and dust-free, touching not the ground.

* * *

In the great silence that has fallen on the world to-day some find cause for discouragement. The outer voices that have spoken to them in the past, now are hushed; the lights of guidance or of warning formerly fixed along the pathway shine no longer. It seems as though all life had ceased, and a world in which they lived awhile had suddenly been swallowed up in darkness. Some unable to endure the change rush back with beating hearts and quickened breath to leave the Terror far behind, and in the noise and glare of outer life to drown the haunting recollections of their loss. I would not say but that many of these are wise. They still *need* outer life; and in saying they follow interior guidance may be quite correct. The soul seeks ever what it needs. Others again do not require the discipline of worldly life, but further psychic experience. This they can always find, and they gravitate naturally towards one of the many psychic centres of the day, each one of which offers some slightly differing features from the others. Looked at from the broadest view-point all this is good. It must be so, if we free ourselves from all sectarianism, and consider matters as we should from the one aspect of the evolution of the soul. Into every question with which we deal enter the pairs of opposites. Regarding either of these alone we will never make reasonable decisions. Only by taking both—one in the light of the other—can we reach just conclusions. Hence the occultist—or I may say the tyro in occultism—must possess the power of seeing both sides of a question,—his own and his opponents; and base his decisions upon an impartial review, quite uncoloured by personal predilection. This wider view-point, if attained, would end once for all much existing confusion in the minds of many sincere and worthy people. Having conscientiously learned that one thing is right, another wrong; one thing true and another false, they feel in duty bound to embrace and further one, to condemn and over-

throw the other. But the soul will be bound by no such considerations: it seeks Eternal Verities, not passing ones; and realizes that we learn as much from failure as success, as much from our sins as from our virtues. One standard alone it holds, the honesty and purity of motive, and impelled by that it goes through all places fair and foul alike. It has been many times stated that he who once became part of this great evolutionary movement, called by some the Theosophical Movement, could never leave it, and that no of it even could affect the basic fact of his connection. There is of it even could effect the basic fact of his connection. There is the true side to the old Puritan doctrine of Election by Grace, as the man born of a certain family remains a member of that family by the insuperable fact of such birth, even though he repudiate it or he be repudiated by it. This works both ways of course, and until he be born again ("except a man be born again") the outsider remains an outsider no matter what name he bears nor what position he takes.

These points fully understood and considered it would appear then that there is no need for confusion or alarm. The man who rushes back to the world, is not to be grieved over. He doubtless gained all he could while in our ranks, and now needs different training. Neither is he to be mourned who is snatched up in a psychic whirlwind and carried off before our eyes. Some one is carefully directing his course, we may be sure, and he will receive just the schooling he needs. Those others again who remain faithful but trembling, holding on desperately, but often with sinking hearts,—why such strain? They too will follow out the pathway of evolution and development planned by their own souls and the Directors of those souls, and serene in this faith in God's providence, humbly conscious of their honest intent, they may calmly pursue their way though nations fall, though continents rise or sink; realizing that all is provided for, that no detail is overlooked or forgotten, the very hairs of our heads being numbered.

All we need is to earnestly wish to learn and we will learn; to truly seek the right and we will find it; to love holiness and it will be ours. For every one "that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

These considerations were suggested to me as the result of conversations with certain members of the Theosophical Society. They have no application whatever to those clear-eyed, dauntless ones whose presence among us constitutes our just pride and our best augury for the future. To these I should not venture to address myself.

CAVÉ.

29th December, 1901.

THE INDIVIDUAL GOD.

In our Study of the Constitution of man as revealed to us in the Esoteric Philosophy we eventually come to an idea that is of most transcendent importance in determining our life's thought and action.

This idea gives the lie, absolute and without reserve or possible compromise, to materialism, and it is equally opposed to the popular theological conceptions of the nature of man as taught in Church and Chapel and at the street corner.

This idea is not one that is very easily grasped by minds that have been badly injured by modern educational methods, but if we want to understand ourselves—and who does not?—we must do our best to appreciate it notwithstanding the difficulty. Certain it is that once we get hold of it, and find ourselves able to accept it is true, it will revolutionise our lives. Our thought will undergo an entire change of direction, for our life's basis will have altered. Our attitude to our fellows, our conceptions of the relation that exists between us and Great Nature, will be quite transformed and as this idea takes hold of men a revolution will gradually take place in every department of our Social life.

That this idea will take hold of the hearts and minds of men and become a ruling power in the earth is as certain as to-morrow's sunrise. Therefore it is well for those who aspire to be helpers of the race, at least to try to understand it thoroughly, whether it is eventually accepted or not. And if our good fortune decrees its present acceptance we shall find ourselves in the honorable position of pioneers in a cause that has for its objective the good of all men and all creatures without any distinction whatever: for in accepting this idea and in striving to make it a vital factor in our own lives, thus becoming its living embodiments, we shall inevitably find ourselves by thought and speech and action planting in the minds of others the seed of that which, as it grows and develops, will change the direction of their lives also to the Universal Good.

What is this wonderful idea?

It is simply the fundamental truth of our own constitution: *what we are.* I will not take up time in reviewing various current

theories of the nature of man and pointing out their fallacies, but will proceed to consider the Theosophical view.

Now we must in the first place keep very clearly in mind the fact that a man, as he ordinarily knows himself, is very far from being the whole of himself. This may seem a rather strange proposition at first hearing, but a little thought will convince us that there is very much more of a man that is *unknown* to himself than there is known. A man is a vast unsolved mystery to himself.

Of the physical body Science prides itself on knowing something, but even here it is harrassed on every side by unsolved mysteries. Yet the body is only the instrument of the mind. And what does our infant science of Psychology know of the mind? Nothing! absolutely nothing. Worse than that. Its books and its continuing investigations are largely based on the false notion that a man is essentially a physical body, and that mind is a product of brain. Its primal hypothesis being wrong, it follows that all its results must be altogether fallacious. So wrong is its basis that we have the revolting spectacle of otherwise sane men wallowing in the horrors of the Vivisection Chamber trying to discover something about mind by inhumanly torturing living bodies of pigeons, frogs, apes, and other animals. I hardly know of any scientific work on psychology which does not draw a great number of its so-called facts from these vile experiments. Yet with all this infliction of useless agony what are the positive results? Absolutely none.

One of the best psychologists of the present day has put the negative nature of the results of psychological Science very clearly. The conclusion of his text book on psychology is as follows:

"When we talk of psychology as a natural science, we must not assume that that means a sort of psychology that stands at last on solid ground. It means just the reverse; it means a psychology particularly fragile, and into which the waters of metaphysical criticism leak at every joint, a psychology all of whose elementary assumptions and data must be reconsidered in wider connections and translated into other terms. It is, in short, a phrase of diffidence, and not of arrogance; and it is indeed strange to hear people talk triumphantly of the New Psychology, and write 'Histories of Psychology' when into the real elements and forces which the word

covers not the first glimpse of clear insight exists. A string of raw facts, a little gossip and wrangle about opinions; a little classification and generalisation on the mere descriptive level, a strong prejudice that we *have* states of mind, and that our brain conditions them: but not a single law in the sense in which physics shows us laws, not a single proposition from which any consequence can causally be deduced.....This is no science, it is only the hope of a Science." (Text Book of Psychology, by William James, Prof. of Psychology in Harvard University, Page 467-8.)

So a man is, as I have said, an unsolved mystery to himself, whether he be an untrained man or a learned professor of psychology. Reaching upwards or inwards from what he knows, or to be quite exact, fancies that he knows, is an unexplored, unfathomed region of *himself,* and that region, tho' unknown, is quite as much *himself,* quite as closely concerned in his well being, quite as effective in its operations, as the limited region that he knows.

He is therefore at least dual in his nature. There is his known self, his habitual self as it were, the limited mental territory in which his ordinary consciousness roams, and his unknown self, a mental territory which *may* be infinite in its extent.

Into the nature of this unknown self and its relation to the known self, we will now enquire: for it is precisely in this unknown region of ourselves that we shall find the key to the mystery of our being.

Of course when I say this *unknown* region of ourselves, I only mean unknown to official science, unknown to those who have drawn their knowledge from such scientific sources. There are those living to-day who have, by methods quite other than those which bind ordinary scientific research, pursued investigations into this region and to them the truth is known. I refer to those known as Mahatmas, the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion. To aid such as are ready to accept the help offered, these teachers have given certain information regarding this unknown region and have invited us to verify it for ourselves. With them the science of psychology is in reality what it purports to be—the Science of the Soul, and they have attained to their exalted state through their individual knowledge of the whole of their own nature and the mastery of the powers, forces, and faculties found therein.

Before turning our attention to our unknown selves let us attach convenient labels to the layers or planes of ourselves that we are familiar with. There is the reasoning part of us. This we may look upon as a very delicate and subtle instrument or piece of machinery for reasoning about things. It is exceedingly useful to us, but is of course limited in its operations. It can only deal with what is put into it. It requires what are called premises and given these, it produces its results. Then there is another plane of our being, the desiring part of us. Here is generated the force that moves to action good or bad, an ever flowing current. Then there is the sensational part of us by means of which we receive news of the outer world, through the appropriate organs. It is the intelligence department, as it were. Through the senses the information from the outer world is transmitted to the Reasoner who makes it up into percepts and concepts and so on. Then there is the outermost casing of all these—the physical body. But all these we feel as outward from ourselves. We feet ourselves in the centre, as the I or Ego that reasons, and desires, and senses, and moves: and a little thought shows us that none of these things are ourselves but collectively form our instrument for reasoning, feeling, sensing, and acting on this earth.

Now turning our attention away from our instrument and bending our gaze into the depths within its user—ourselves—we find other and inner layers of our being. I find on looking into myself that here is something which I call conscience. I find a power of knowing right from wrong, something which deals with my relations to others—not only to the reasoning, feeling, sensing and acting instruments of others, but to the very selves of those others; and I find something which deals with my relation to, with my place and purpose in, this great universe that surrounds me—something which is conscious of a distinct relation to the causal side of that universe as well as to the effects of which my senses inform me. I find that here is something which seems superior to myself, yet a very real part of myself, somethings to which I know that I know that I should lend a ready ear, something that I should willingly obey, and not only obey, but something that I should eagerly search out in order to know more fully that I may obey in a greater

measure. This is the moral plane, the plane of ethics and of religion.

All this you have found too. We all of us know these things and have no need for argument or evidence or proof about them, and no amount of discussion will shake what we know at first hand.

We can smile gently at the materialist who assures us that all this arises from the mechanical quiverings of the jelly—protoplasm to be quite scientific—inside the skull. Nature will dissipate his illusions in good time.

Granting all this, what we now want is the philosophy that will explain our settled, unshakeable facts.

This voice of conscience—it is well called a voice—whose voice is it? Who is the August Speaker that we are impelled to obey: that we ardently desire to obey: who is this Inner Director of our lives, this infallible Guide? Do we think of conscience as something separate and apart, something outside ourselves? We do not. It is *our* conscience, not another's conscience. The conscience of another is no voice, no guide to us. We feel that this conscience is a very intimate part of ourselves indeed, much more real than the reasoning, feeling, sensing, moving vehicle we use.

If we ask ourselves on what planes of being we must place this superior self of ours, this infallible guide, this tireless friend, who is so careful for our welfare, we shall have to answer, the plane of Wisdom for he is the *knower* and the plane of Compassion for his nature is *Love.*

This higher divine part of us is the Individual God. This is the idea we have to understand.

Within each of us, in the innermost deeps of our unknown selves, there is an individual deity: we, men on earth, in the purest part of our natures, are the sons of our respective Fathers in heaven.

I use this word Father under protest. The word Mother would be equally correct: And in some religions the word Mother is used. In the Egyptian *Book of the Coming Forth by Day* there is an invocation to this higher self as Mother. In the judgment scene the formula used by the deceased in addressing his higher, inner nature, is "My heart, My Mother! My heart whereby I came into being! May there be no parting of thee from me in the presence

of him that keepeth the Balance." (Egyptian idea of the Future Life (Budge) 142.)

It must not of course for a moment be imagined that the higher nature is either male or female. Sex pertains to the Soul's instrument, not to the Soul itself. But unfortunately we have no word in the English language to express exactly the relationship to ourselves of this conscious, wise, compassionate and divine being. Therefore with this protest against the limitation of the language I will continue to use the word Father.

Our Fathers in Heaven, our Individual Gods, our Higher Egos are not creations of God as the Christian fancies what he calls his Soul, to be. Their beginning is unimaginable and their end cannot be conceived. For untold millions of years they have been connected with this earth, engaged in the great work, which is to fashion a divine humanity.

What then was their origin? They are Sons of God. In Eastern Books they are called Manasa-Putra—Sons of the Universal mind. They bear the same relation to the one Deity, the Ultimate Self of all beings, as we bear to them. They are inseparable from the Divine Essence: we are inseparate from them. They are individualised aspects of Deity. We are aspects of them.

If this statement seems complicated we must bear in mind that we are trying to solve one of the greatest of life's problems and life itself is not at all simple. Perhaps if we approach it from the other end it will become plainer.

The highest thought of which we are capable reveals to us the fact that the Universe is a Unity, one single Being manifested as many beings—as an old verse puts it—"all selves are one self differing only in degree."

There is one life welling up in all creatures. The difference in degree is the difference in, the clearness and completeness of the being's ability to express the one divine life. Thus we see a difference in degree between the mineral, the plant, the animal and the human kingdom as known to us.

In each successive degree the higher degrees are present, but latent and await their due unfoldment.

The inner plane of being to which I have referred as the moral plane represents really another degree, a degree which is now un-

folding in the human kingdom. When fully unfolded the human being will be one step higher in the scale of life than he now is. He will have become a Divine Being on earth.

This unfolding of the moral principle in man means that the Individual God is endeavouring to express its divine self on all the planes of being which extend outward from itself. It is not content with being a God in Heaven: its will is to be a God on earth. The difficulty it has to contend with lies in the unresponsive nature of the materials, if I may use that word, with which it must construct its various instruments of expression: its thinking, desiring, sensing, moving instruments.

Its nature is such that if it were to try to express itself immediately without all the preparation that is going on, its action would be like the lightning stroke. There might be a brilliant illumination for an instant of time, but the instrument would be shattered. Ultimately it will attain full immediate expression, but this requires a long course of making ready the materials so that they may respond to its fiery energies, its divine impulses without hurt. For such preparations of the lower plane materials it needs a mediator between itself and those outer planes. Or to pursue our electrical analogy it requires what is called a transformer to change the high potential energies into safe and useful currents for the work required to be done.

This mediator it creates from itself. Each time it takes up its work on the outer planes it begins by emanating, by its own creative power, a portion of itself and that portion partakes in every respect of the divine nature of its emanator save in the intensity of its energies. But there is no separation between the two, the Father in Heaven and the Son on Earth: the channel of inter-communication is constantly available during waking hours, and during deep sleep the Son rejoins his Father in Heaven and the two re-become one.

You and I then are Sons of our Individual Divine Fathers. The Father and I are one in essence, but dual during waking life on earth for the object of carrying out the will of the Father, and the purposes of Soul.

This idea of the duality of our consciousness, of there being a permanent man and a temporary man, which, though one in reality may yet act independently, will not seem so strange if we remember

that even in our ordinary lives we have instances of a dual action of consciousness. It is well known that a skillful pianist can play a difficult piece of music, and at the same time be engrossed in a conversation apparently requiring the whole attention. Or to take a more common instance, we may go for a walk, choosing our way, avoiding traffic and obstacles and all the while be so deeply thinking that nothing of the outer world is perceived by the thinking part. In both instances the ordinary consciousness has become dual one part attending to one class of perceptions and the other attending to another class. At any moment, however, the two parts may become one. The playing may stop or the conversation cease. The thinking may stop and the consciousness be directed entirely to the outer world, or the walk may stop and the thinking go on.

A NEW DEPARTURE.

One of the good signs, promising a fair future to the spiritual awakening of our day, is the "fair play" attitude of the American clergy of various denominations towards the religious practices and especially the religious spirit of the East. So many of them, it is evident, are sincerely inclined to learn, to understand. And, without any exaggeration, it is an immense gain on the spirit of sectarian righteousness of only the day before yesterday.

The glorious example—or rather exception—of Phillips Brooks notwithstanding, foregone conclusions as to the iniquity, the obstinate blindness and the all round "heathenry" of all non-Christian countries were distinctly encouraged by the clergy not so long ago, in a wholesale way, both in Europe and America. As to liberty-loving England, it is quite possible that she still subsidises, at one of her great Universities, a good Sanskrit scholar, who is expected to lend a helping hand to the missionaries going out to show India the error of her ways. And needless to say, that in this task neither the professor, nor the missionary, is in the least concerned about seeing fair play or understanding what is in their opponent's mind.

But as I have stated before, ignorant unfairness of this kind is fast becoming a thing of the past amongst the best representatives of American clergy.

Bishop Potter's recent article on India: Its People and Its Religion, published in *The Churchman* of November 9th and 16th, is brimful of this fair play attitude. It shows a broader and more tolerant view of the religious customs of the East than is generally shown by the Western tourist, whether clerical or lay. The Bishop visited Japan, China, India and Ceylon and, to quote from his article, "was so fortunate, more than once, as to make the acquaintance of native East Indians of distinguished rank and varied culture. In all such cases they were, I beg to say, persons who retained their ancient religion, Buddhist, Mohammedan or Parsee, as the case might be, and who had no keener enthusiasm than that which cherished their national, racial and religious tradition."

And it seems that this "keen enthusiasm" of the heathen is not only tolerated, but even approved by the reverend gentleman, for he goes on to say: "Whatever else was true of the men who, as mis-

sionaries, first set on foot that mighty invasion of the heathen world which from such small beginnings, has grown to such noble and stately proportions, this certainly was not true, that they had then advanced to such a recognition of the presence of God even in heathendom as led them, first of all, to seek for *sympathetic* contact with it. We cannot read the story of what they said, and of how they wrought, without recognizing, in all early missionary enterprises, in modern times, a very imperfect apprehension of the fact that God has not left Himself anywhere without witnesses among men, and that their little systems who dwell, or have dwelt in pagan lands, whether of philosophy or religion, while but broken lights that were destined to have only their brief day—in that like so many of our own! were after all yet broken lights of *God;* dim glimmers of the fuller splendors of a coming day. The comparative study of religions has brought to light, for every student who has pursued it with thoroughness and candor, at least two convictions—one that God has had, in all human history, many ways of revealing himself; and the other that there is, after all, no wholly right method of missionary endeavor other than recognition of the deep want of man and of the often honest though often blundering methods of men who sought to find an answer to it!"

He then quotes from the laws of Manu and admits that many of these laws, especially those applying to the home and the treatment of women, might well be followed in Christian communities.

In conclusion Bishop Potter says: "Some of us here can recall the smile of mingled mirth and derision with which, a few years ago, it was announced that the Mohammedans were preparing to send missionaries and establish a Mohammedan mission in the City of New York. We were so superior in our Occidental virtue that the whole thing seemed a huge joke. And yet, thus far, Christianity has utterly failed to control the vice of drunkenness. The great cities of this land are dominated, not by their churches or their universities, but by their saloons. But Mohammedanism in Oriental lands does control the drink habit. Said Isaac Taylor after declaring that 'Mohammedanism stands in fierce opposition to gambling and makes a gambler's testimony invalid in law:'—'Islam is the most powerful total abstinence association in the world.'"

The following sentence is especially vigorous and striking:

"Heirs of a great faith, it belongs to us to learn from it so much at least of the law of the brotherhood as shall enable us to treat other faiths, other philosophies, other manners than our own with courteous consideration."

We gladly acknowledge that no Theosophist could have thought more nobly or expressed himself with more eloquence.

The fact of Bishop Potter having observed in a broad-minded and impartial spirit and having had the courage of his opinions, in the face of his own country and "parish," is very important and, besides, extremely encouraging for our own Theosophical endeavours. The reverend gentleman has seen beneath the surface. He realizes that the Buddhist, Mohammedan and Parsee is not a heathen who in his blindness "bows down to wood and stone," but is one whose morals in many respects compare favorably with those of Christian countries: that like all of us he has his portion of the great truth.

Let us hope that this is the beginning of the broader criticism tempered with tolerance and respect for the opinions of others; the criticism which understands that the most ignorant savage perceives some spark of the light, however dull; the criticism which realizes that no one man, creed or race can hold all the truth: The broader criticism of Theosophy.

A NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

It becomes my duty as treasurer of the T. S. A. to remind its members that under the ruling of the present constitution, our organization relies for its financial sustenance upon their *voluntary contributions.* The system thus established has proved fairly successful in providing for the inevitable deficit in the expense account of our publications; but to support the measures undertaken and desired to be undertaken by the Secretary to enliven and extend the work for which the Society exists, it will be necessary for us to be more liberal in our donations. This suggestion does not apply to the particular few upon whom the treasurer has heretofore relied to come to the rescue in case of emergency, but is directed towards those good people usually in the majority who, believing it to be "more blessed to give than to receive," are self-sacrificing enough always to be willing to let the blessing accrue mainly to the other fellow.

Money intended for Theosophical purposes may be sent to the undersigned, who will in all cases immediately acknowledge receipt thereof. Remittances may be made in bank notes, by draft on New York, (other checks cost from ten to twenty-five cents for exchange), or preferably by Post Office Orders.

A. H. SPENCER,
Treasurer T. S. A.
Box 1584, N. Y.

TO OUR READERS.

There are many among our readers who feel an impulse to write something, either as a comment on something in THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, or following up some new line of thought. Very often, and very wrongly, they resist this impulse, through lack of self-confidence, or, perhaps, mere laziness.

We invite these future writers to begin at once. We shall be very glad to receive and consider anything they may send us. If THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM is to be read, it must first be written; and we should keep in mind that, in our Movement, we learn by teaching, and teach by learning.

THE EDITOR,
Flushing, N. Y.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

Founded by H. P. BLAVATSKY at New York in 1875.

The Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics.*

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *Path* to tread in this."

There are no dues.

The expenses of the Theosophical Society in America are met by voluntary contributions, which should be sent to A. H. Spencer, Treasurer T. S. in A., Box 1584, New York, N. Y.

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S. A., P. O. Box 1584, New York.